

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Previously presented) An apparatus for sending a heartbeat signal in a cluster computing system, the apparatus comprising:
 - a first host group; and
 - a first storage system associated with the first host group, the first host group coupled via a network to a second host group, the first storage system coupled via a remote link separate from the network to a second storage system associated with the second host group, the first host group configured to selectively send a heartbeat signal to the second host group by use of the remote link by sending a memory command to the first storage system which is mirrored via the remote link using a remote copy mechanism to the second storage system.
2. (Previously presented) A method of sending a heartbeat signal in a cluster computing system, the method comprising:
 - generating a heartbeat signal from a first host group, the first host group being associated with a first storage system;
 - selectively sending the heartbeat signal from the first host group to a second host group by use of a remote link coupled between the first storage system and a second storage system associated with the second host group, the heartbeat signal being sent from the first storage system via the remote link to the second storage system using a remote copy mechanism.
3. (Previously presented) An electronically-readable medium storing a program for permitting a computer to perform method of sending a heartbeat signal in a cluster computing system, the method comprising:
 - generating a heartbeat signal from a first host group, the first host group being associated with a first storage system;
 - selectively sending the heartbeat signal from the first host group to a second host group by use of a remote link coupled between the first storage system and a second storage system associated with the second host group, the heartbeat signal being sent from the first storage system via the remote link to the second storage system using a remote copy mechanism.

4. (Previously presented) A program code embedded on a carrier wave for causing a computer to perform a method of sending a heartbeat signal in a cluster computing system, the method comprising:

generating a heartbeat signal from a first host group, the first host group being associated with a first storage system;

selectively sending the heartbeat signal from the first host group to a second host group by use of a remote link coupled between the first storage system and a second storage system associated with the second host group, the heartbeat signal being sent from the first storage system via the remote link to the second storage system using a remote copy mechanism.

5. (Previously presented) An apparatus for receiving a heartbeat signal in a cluster computing system, the apparatus comprising:

a remote host group; and

a remote storage system associated with the remote host group, the remote host group configured to selectively receive a heartbeat signal by use of a remote link coupled to the remote storage system, the heartbeat signal being received by the remote storage system via the remote link using a remote copy mechanism.

6. (Previously presented) A method of receiving a heartbeat signal in a cluster computing system, the method comprising:

selectively receiving a heartbeat signal in a remote host group by use of a remote link coupled with a storage system associated with the remote host group, the heartbeat signal being received via the remote link at the storage system using a remote copy mechanism.

7. (Previously presented) An electronically-readable medium storing a program for permitting a computer to perform a method of receiving a heartbeat signal in a cluster computing system, the method comprising:

selectively receiving a heartbeat signal in a remote host group by use of a remote link coupled with a storage system associated with the remote host group, the heartbeat signal being received by the storage system via the remote link using a remote copy mechanism.

8. (Previously presented) A program code embedded on a carrier wave for causing a computer to perform a method of receiving a heartbeat signal in a cluster computing system, the method comprising:

selectively receiving a heartbeat signal in a remote host group by use of a remote link coupled with a storage system associated with the remote host group, the heartbeat signal being received by the storage system via the remote link using a remote copy mechanism.

9. (Previously presented) A cluster computing system, comprising:

a production host group;

a standby host group coupled to the production host group by a network; and

a remote mirror coupled between the production host group and the standby host group, the remote mirror being separate from the network;

the production host group configured to selectively send a heartbeat signal to the standby host group by use of the remote mirror, the heartbeat signal being sent from a first storage system associated with the production host group via the remote mirror to a second storage system associated with the standby host group using a remote copy mechanism.

10. (Previously presented) A method of checking for failure in a cluster computing system, the method comprising:

generating a heartbeat signal from a first host group;

selectively sending the heartbeat signal from the first host group to a second to host group by use of a remote mirror coupled between the host groups, the heartbeat signal being sent from a first storage system associated with the first host group via the remote link to a second storage system associated with the second host group using a remote copy mechanism.

11. (Previously presented) A cluster computing system, comprising:

a production host group;

a standby host group coupled to the production host group by a network; and

a remote mirror coupled between the production host group and the standby host group, the remote mirror including a production site heartbeat storage volume (heartbeat PVOL) and a standby site heartbeat storage volume (heartbeat SVOL) coupled by a remote link to the heartbeat PVOL, the remote mirror being separate from the network;

the production host group configured to selectively send a heartbeat signal to the standby host group by use of the remote link using a remote copy mechanism.

12. (Original) The cluster computing system of claim 11 wherein the production host group comprises a first heartbeat check module configured to generate the heartbeat signal.

13. (Original) The cluster computing system of claim 11 wherein the standby host group comprises a second heartbeat check module configured to receive the heartbeat signal.

14. (Original) The cluster computing system of claim 11 wherein the standby host group manages operations of the cluster computing system if an invalid heartbeat signal is received by the standby host group from the production host group.

15. (Original) The cluster computing system of claim 11 wherein the heartbeat message comprises: a serial number assigned to the heartbeat message, a time indicator indicating a time of the generation of the heartbeat message, and an identifier identifying a sender of the heartbeat message.

16. (Previously Presented) The cluster computing system of claim 11 further comprising:
a second remote mirror coupled between the production host group and the standby host group, the second remote mirror including a second remote link for transmitting a heartbeat signal;

the standby host group configured to selectively send a heartbeat signal to the production host group by use of the second remote link.

17. (Previously presented) A method of checking for failure in a cluster computing system, the method comprising:

generating a heartbeat signal from a production host group;
selectively sending the heartbeat signal to a standby host group from the production host group by use of a remote link using a remote copy mechanism; and
enabling the standby host group to manage operations of the cluster computing system if an invalid heartbeat signal is received by the standby host group from the production host group.

18. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17 further comprising:
selectively sending a heartbeat signal to the production host group from the standby host group by use of a second remote link.
19. (Original) The method of claim 17 further comprising:
installing remote mirrors in the cluster computing system, including:
registering a first storage volume to a device address entry, the first storage volume located in a production site, and, from the production site, changing a remote mirror that includes the first storage volume into an enabled mode;
sending an activation message from the production site to a standby site;
registering a second storage volume to the device address entry, the second storage volume located in the standby site; and
from the standby site, changing the remote mirror into an enabled mode to install a remote mirror formed by the first storage volume and second storage volume.
20. (Original) The method of claim 17 further comprising:
de-installing remote mirrors in the cluster computing system, including:
from a production site, changing a remote mirror into a disabled mode;
sending a de-activation message from the first production site to a standby site; and
from the standby site, changing the remote mirror into a disabled mode to de-install the remote mirror.
21. (Original) The method of claim 17 wherein the selectively sending step comprises:
determining if a network between the production site host and the standby site host is enabled;
if the network is enabled, sending a heartbeat message along the network from the production site host to the standby site host;
determining if a remote mirror between the production site host and the standby site host is enabled; and
if the remote mirror is enabled, sending a heartbeat message along the remote mirror from the production site host to the standby site host.

22. (Original) The method of claim 17 further comprising:

receiving a heartbeat message from the production site host to the standby site host in the cluster computing system, including:

determining if a network between the production site host and the standby site host is enabled;

if the network is enabled, checking for a heartbeat message along the network from the production site host to the standby site host;

determining if a remote mirror between the production site host and the standby site host is enabled;

if the remote mirror is enabled, checking for a heartbeat message along the remote mirror from the production site host to the standby site host; and

if an invalid heartbeat is received along the network and along the remote mirror, enabling the standby host to manage operations of the cluster computing system.

23. (Canceled)

24. (Canceled)